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Welcome to the BEHR Paint online paint & coatings glossary. Here, you will find definitions of terms and phrases frequently used in the world of paint and coating technology. To find a term, either browse by letter, enter a keyword, or filter by topic.

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**Sag:** Narrow (or wide curtain-like) downward movement of a paint or varnish film; may be caused by the application of too much coating, the collection of excess quantities of paint at irregularities in the surface (cracks, holes, etc.), or excessive material continuing to flow after the surrounding surface has set. Also referred to as runs or tears.

**Sand Finish:** A paint that has been texturized with sand.

**Sanding Sealer:** Especially hard first coat that can seal and fill, but will not obscure, the grain of the wood. The surface is then sanded before subsequent coats are applied.

**Scrubability:** The ability of a coating to resist wearing away or changing its original appearance when rubbed with a brush, sponge, or cloth and an abrasive soap.

**Scuff Sand:** To lightly sand in order to remove the shine or roughness of a surface prior to painting or staining.

**Sealer:** A liquid coat that seals wood, plaster, etc., and prevents the surface from absorbing paint or varnish. Sealers may be transparent, and can act as primers. Some sealers are designed to be left uncoated.

**Secondary Colors:** Colors formed by mixing together two primary colors. They are: orange, green, and purple.

**Semi-gloss Finish:** A paint with a gloss level between high gloss and eggshell/satin.

**Semi-transparent Stain:** Stain that alters the natural color of the wood, yet allows the grain and texture to show through. The term is generally applied to exterior products, but technically applies also to interior wiping stains used for trim, furniture and floors.

**Settling:** The sinking of pigments or other solid matter in a paint on standing in a container, with the subsequent accumulation on the bottom of the container.

**Shade:** A shade is created when black is added to a color. It is a darker variant of a color.

**Sheen:** A moderately low degree of gloss; gloss with poor distinctness-of-image reflectance. Characteristic where a coating appears to be flat when viewed near to the perpendicular, but appears to be glossy when viewed from a low or grazing angle.

**Shellac:** Alcohol-soluble, clear to orange-colored resin derived from lac. (Lac is a substance secreted by insects on tree branches, mainly in India.) Used as a sealer and clear finish for floors, for sealing knots, and in "alcohol-based" primers. Thinner is denatured alcohol.

**Silicate:** Any one of a large family of substances chiefly used with titanium dioxide, the primary pigment, as an extender pigment. When used in moderation, these silicates (magnesium silicate, aluminum silicate, etc.) are valuable in helping control gloss, aid brushability, and increase hold-out properties and overall exterior durability.

**Skin:** The film that forms on the surface of a stored paint or caulk. It is caused by exposure to air.

**Softwood:** The group of trees (fir, pine, spruce, hemlock) characterized by its needles and being (for the most part) evergreen. The term does not refer to the hardness of the wood.

**Solids:** Non-volatile matter in the composition of a coating or a caulk, i.e. the ingredients in a coating that, after drying,

constitute the dry film. Solids are composed mostly of pigment and binder.

**Soluble:** The ability of a material to be dissolved in a liquid. For example, sugar is soluble in water.

**Solvent:** A usually volatile liquid in which a paint's film-forming particles are dissolved or dispersed.

**Spackling Compound:** A powder mixed with water or a ready-mix compound that is primarily used to fill large cracks in walls. It dries hard and can be sanded and painted, but does not tolerate much movement in the substrate.

**Spar Varnish:** Exterior varnish with good water resistance and the capability to resist weathering. Named for its original use on the spars of ships.

**Spatter:** Droplets of paint that spin or mist off the roller as paint is being applied.

**Sponge Painting (Sponging):** Interior painting technique in which natural sea sponges are used to apply or partially remove a "glaze coat" of paint.

**Spot-prime:** To apply a primer to those areas where paint has been removed or stripped to the original surface.

**Spray:** Method of application in which the paint is broken up into a fine mist and directed to the surface under pressure. Specific types of spray equipment are: aerosol, airless, and air assisted.

**Spread Rate:** The volume of a coating that can cover a given area. The recommended spread rate is usually indicated on the paint can, e.g., 450 sq. ft./gallon (11 m<sup>2</sup>/l). Spread rate depends on application method and technique, porosity of the substrate, etc., as well as on the nature of the particular coating.

**Stain:** A partly transparent coating that can color wood without obscuring the grain and/or the texture. Also refers to materials that soil the surface of a coating.

**Stain Bleed-through:** When tannin found in certain types of wood (such as cedar or redwood) migrates through the coating, causing discoloration. Also, discoloration from a contaminant on the substrate.

**Stain Resistance:** The ability of a coating to resist soiling.

**Stenciling:** A method of applying a design by brushing or sponging paint through a cutout overlay placed on the surface.

**Stipple Look:** A textured, irregular effect created using a sponge, rubber roller, or stipple brush.

**Stripping:** Removing old paint, varnish, etc., by using paint remover, sandpaper, heat gun, or scraping tools. Also, the removal of wallpaper.

**Studs:** 2" X 4" or 2" X 6" wood or steel used as the framing support for walls. Usually placed sixteen inches apart from the center of the stud.

**Substrate:** Any surface to which a coating or sealant is applied.

**Surface Preparation:** Any means for preparing a surface for painting including cleaning, sanding, spackling, and spot priming.

**Surfactant Leaching:** Also called water-spotting and weeping. It is often a tan-colored, glossy residue that can form on the surface when exterior latex paint is applied under conditions that are cool and damp, that result in slow dry of the paint. May not readily wash off, but generally will weather off within a month's time.

**Surfactants:** Contracted from surface-active agents, these are additives which reduce surface tension and thereby improve wetting (wetting agents), help disperse pigments, inhibit foam, or emulsify. Conventionally, they are classified as to their charge: anionic (negative); cationic (positive); nonionic (no charge); or amphoteric (both positive and negative).

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